

Battle Road Authenticity Standards 2012

The people we portray in living history deserve our best efforts. Remember, they can no longer speak for or represent themselves. When done well, living history can be a unique way to honor them and restore a touch of humanity to their memories.

Battle Road has the reputation for quality and of maintaining high authenticity standards. This is because of the work you all have done, and the pride you take in this unique event.

The following guidelines were approved by The Battle Road Committee. More information is also available at thehiveonline.org and battleroad.org

General Protocol

During living history programs/encampments at Minute Man National Historical Park, historical authenticity standards will be observed and in effect during hours when visitors are on the grounds: generally 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. unless otherwise stated. Participants are required to dress in as authentic and appropriate manner of clothing for 1775 for Eastern Massachusetts as is proper and possible. Western frontier and native dress are not acceptable; this includes hunting shirts with fringe, beads, and a general "buckskin" or Native American appearance. No anachronisms such as: cameras, cell phones, cigarettes, plastic items, wrist watches, modern jewelry, sleeping bags, coolers, non-period glasses or sunglasses, etc., will be used in sight of any visitor during hours of operation. (Because of the expense of period glasses, modern glasses will be accepted if not too obvious [wire frames only].)

For safety and authenticity purposes clothing must be of natural fiber such as wool, linen or cotton. Polyester, nylon, Velcro, or other synthetic fabrics present a safety hazard and may not be worn. Any modern accoutrements such as company pins, logos, nameplates or any other paraphernalia are not authentic to the period may not be worn. Bales of straw (provided for bedding) will be opened and spread out. Full bales are out of period, especially when tied with brightly colored nylon cord.

Men's Clothing

Frock coat or workman's jacket is required for all military impressions: of wool, linen (flax or hemp), or cotton. Soldiers may not turn out in only their waistcoats and shirtsleeves without a sleeved outer garment. Likewise, farmers' smocks will not be allowed. Militia/minute companies may not take the field in matching coats, or uniforms of any kind. Leather coats and frontier/rifle/hunting shirts (the garment with the cape and the fringe) are not acceptable.

Shirt and neckwear: long, full sleeved, closed neck with stock, cravat, or neck cloth: Linen, cotton, wool in white, natural, or checked. Laced-trimmed jabots and ruffled stocks sold by several sutlers are not acceptable as a neck covering. A neck covering as described above is required.

Waistcoat: wool, linen, cotton (or silk if appropriate to the overall impression). Necessary with frock coat, optional with buttoned workman's jacket.

Breeches: wool, linen, leather, or cotton (or silk if appropriate to the overall impression). Trousers are acceptable as part of a lower class impression. Fringed suede frontier-style trousers are not acceptable.

Stockings: over the knee, wool, cotton or linen (or silk if appropriate to the overall impression), white or colors, held up with leather or cloth tape garters. Horizontally striped stockings and athletic socks are not allowed.

Shoes: period-style leather shoes with buckles or 2 hole lace up, black or brown. Reproduction shoes are strongly encouraged, but if not possible, farmer's half boots or half gaiters (see below) may be worn over modern leather shoes, provided that they are properly fit (snug, not loose) and adequately cover the shoes.

Gaiters: Farmer's half boots or half gaiters of dark brown or black wool, or linen canvas may also be worn over period style shoes. Knee length F&I or Rev. War style gaiters are not appropriate for wear at Battle Road.

Hat: Must be worn out of doors. Cocked hat (civilian or military, depending upon



your particular impression,) uncocked hat, knitted cap, workman's cap.

Knapsacks: Knapsacks are recommended for militia impressions. Market wallets and work bags are also appropriate, as is the use of your pockets. Snapsacks are still acceptable though there is an ongoing debate of their appropriateness. Haversacks are not appropriate for civilian and militia impressions. If you portray a minute/militiaman or colonial civilian, you may not wear a haversack. Only British regulars may wear a haversack.

Further Suggestions:

Proper Fit: The fit of clothing was extremely important to the 18th century person. Should you go out today to buy a suit, it is highly unlikely that it would fit perfectly off the rack. At a minimum, you would need the pants and sleeves hemmed, jacket taken in, etc. It's the same with your 18th century kit. Unless your clothing was custom made for you by a tailor, alterations are necessary for them to fit you properly. Breeches should fit well snugly around the leg and knee band, and should not be too long (i.e., the knee band should close about three fingers' width below the knee cap - and not extend down the calf). Coats should fit well about the body and should move with you unlike modern coats where you move within the coat. We strongly encourage participants to consider these guidelines regarding the fit of clothing, both for the sake of a more authentic appearance, but also for greater ease and comfort in wearing, and for longer life of the garments.

Facial Hair: Beards and moustaches are not appropriate for 18th century New England. We strongly recommend shaving before attending this event out of respect for your fellow reenactors, and, most importantly, the people we portray. For those who will not be clean shaven for this event, we ask, by way of a compromise, that you trim your facial hair to resemble a maximum of three days growth.



Women's Clothing

Sleeved outer garment: such as gown, jacket, caraco, bed gown, or riding habit of wool, linen, or cotton (or silk if appropriate to the overall impression). Because of the difficulty of obtaining period-appropriate prints, it is recommended that you avoid prints unless you have studied them in detail or can find exact replicas (such as Williamsburg replicas though not all their offerings are authentic); paisleys, cabbage roses, and 19th century calicoes are not correct. The sleeveless so-called "French bodice" and "English bodice" are not acceptable. A sleeved outer garment is required.

Petticoats: recommended 2.5-3 yards in circumference, longer than mid-calf; high-ankle/low-calf suggested. At least one petticoat with full-length gown; otherwise at least two. See above concerning prints. Print petticoats are only acceptable if worn with a gown or jacket of the same fabric.



Shift: low necked, sleeves reaching slightly below elbow. Linen, cotton, or wool in white or natural. Stays or Jumps: highly recommended. If wearing a fitted garment like gown, caraco or jacket, stays or jumps are required.

Neck handkerchief: recommended. Triangle or folded square of linen, cotton, or wool (or silk appropriate to the overall impression) in white, natural, solid color, or small checks, stripes or period block print. Shawls are not acceptable.

Apron: Wool, linen, or cotton (or silk if appropriate to the overall impression) in solid color or small checks or stripes. No eyelet or bibbed aprons.

Stockings: over the knee, linen, wool, silk, or cotton, white or colors, held up with leather or cloth tape garters. Horizontally striped stockings and athletic socks are not allowed. (As stockings do not show above low calf at most, plain modern knee socks are acceptable and garters are optional.)

Shoes: Period-style leather or cloth shoes with buckles or 1 hole lace up, black or brown (plain modern black leather shoes may be worn if petticoats reach

ankles or lower).

Cap: White linen or organdy. Acceptable cap styles are too numerous to list here, but “mobcaps” (a single circle of cloth gathered with a casing and/or elastic to form a ruffle) are not acceptable. Note that a plain cap with front band and gathered back is the simplest to make. A cap or hat is required except for fine ladies with dressed hair. No eyelet trim or fabric.

Hat: Low-crowned women’s style in straw, or felt, plain or covered; or bonnet. A cap or hat is required except for fine ladies. Hats typically were simply decorated; flowers, and feathers should be avoided, unless doing a gentry interpretation.

Hair: Either long, pulled back from the face, and put up, or hidden with a cap. Long or thick bangs should be pulled back off the face. Obviously-dyed hair (a color not naturally occurring in hair) should be well-covered by a cap.

Make-up: If worn at all, should not be noticeable.

Cold weather gear: Optional. Period-pattern cloaks, mantles, tippetts, hoods, etc. Wool kerchiefs. Woven or knitted wool, linen, or cotton (or silk appropriate to the overall impression) mitts, mittens, or gloves. Wool and/or fur muffs. Kinsale cloaks are discouraged as are Celtic pins and penannular brooches. Wearing a men’s military uniform coat is unacceptable. To keep warm, we highly recommend wearing layers underneath your clothing where they are not seen. For example, silk or polypropylene long johns, and/or tights.

About lace: Eyelet and tatting are not authentic to the period. Crochet is not acceptable in any form (lace, shawls, etc.). Machine-made lace is acceptable if it is in imitation of period-style lace.

Baskets, market baskets and workbags: Baskets should be made of wood splint or willow, metal parts are discouraged. Also use of pockets is strongly encouraged.

Children’s Clothing Babes in arms: Shirt or shift, and cap, of linen, cotton, or wool, in white. A frock and petticoat are optional but preferred. Shoes and stockings optional. If plastic diapers are used, cover with a cloth.

Young children: (unbreeched boys from toddlers through age 3 to 7 and girls from toddlers through early puberty) shift of linen, cotton, or wool, in white or natural with a child’s frock (back closing for either gender / front closing for boys only) and petticoat. Cap and / or hat for girls (optional but preferred), workman’s cap or uncocked or single cocked hat for boys (optional). Stockings, as for women. Period-style shoes; due to the expense of children’s shoes, any black or brown leather lace-up modern shoes are also acceptable. Shoes and stockings are optional but strongly recommended.